

# *Documents on Diplomacy: The Source*

## *Americans Taken Captive!*

*John Jay's Report on American Prisoners in Algiers, New York, January 2, 1786*

**T**he Secretary of the United States for the Department of Foreign Affairs to whom was referred a Letter to his Excellency the President dated 28<sup>th</sup> August 1785 from Richard O'Bryen and others in Captivity at Algiers; which Letter was transmitted enclosed in one from James Wilkie of Marseilles—Reports

That this Letter states, that the Ship *Dauphin*, Richard O'Bryen Master, of Philadelphia, bound from S<sup>t</sup> Urbes was taken the 30<sup>th</sup> July last, having fifteen souls on board.

That the Schooner *Maria*, Captain Isaac Stephens Master, of Boston, bound from that Place to Cadiz, was taken the 27<sup>th</sup> July last having six Persons on board.

That they were carried to Algiers, and sent to work at the King's Places, in a destitute Condition, and there kept to Labour with very scanty Allowance of Provisions.

That Charles Logie, Esquire, the British Consul there, afterward took them to his House, on becoming responsible for them at the Rate of £600 Sterling to a Man, and engaging to pay monthly two Dollars for each of them to the King.

Your Secretary is of Opinion that a Copy of this Letter should be sent to the American Ministers charged with negotiating Peace with the Barbary Powers, with orders to provide for the Redemption of these and all other Americans detained there in Captivity, in the most speedy and least expensive Manner, which the State of their Negotiations and other Circumstances may admit.

Your Secretary is further of Opinion that the American Minister at the Court of London be directed to signify to his Britannic

Majesty the Sense they entertain of the Humanity and Generosity of his Consul Charles Logie, Esquire. That he also write a Letter to M<sup>r</sup> Logie and inform him that the United States are exceedingly pleased with his Conduct, and will immediately provide for the Reimbursement of the Expenses incurred by his Generosity to their captive Citizens. That he also make further Enquiries concerning the friendly and liberal Behavior of Mr. Logie, and transmit the Result of them to your Secretary without Delay.

Your Secretary further Reports that in his Opinion it will be necessary to provide in Season, for supplying the Ministers directed to treat with the Powers in Question, with further Funds, it appearing very doubtful whether the Sum granted to them will be adequate to the Attainment of the Objects of those Negotiations, especially as the Expense of purchasing Peace will naturally be enhanced by the Number and Value of the Captives to be liberated.

All which is submitted to the Wisdom of Congress.

**JOHN JAY**

### *Source*

*The Emerging Nation: A Documentary History of the Foreign Relations of the United States under the Articles of Confederation, 1780-1789*, Mary A. Giunta, Editor-in-Chief, Volume III. Washington, DC : Government Printing Office, 1996.

NA: PCC, item 81, v.2, pp. 8-10 (LS); M247, reel 107.